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ABSTRACT

Administrator renewal is a broad and complex topic with numerous subtopics. This report is limited to procedures and processes many school districts and their administrators use to develop professional growth opportunities for educational leaders. It also describes the activities, goals, and objectives of the Colorado Department of Education in encouraging and assisting interested Colorado school systems to organize staff development programs for their administrators. The report is divided into three sections, each of which answers a question: What is the administrator renewal concept? What is the nature of the programs school districts organize? What is it that the Colorado Department of Education does to encourage and assist districts to organize such programs? (Author/IRT)

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THE COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL DISTRICT BASED ADMINISTRATOR RENEWAL PROGRAMS

November, 1975

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Administrator renewal is a broad and complex topic with numerous sub-topics. This report is limited to procedures and processes many school districts and their administrators use to develop professional growth opportunities for educational leaders. It also describes the actual activities, as well as the goals and objectives, of the Colorado Department of Education to encourage and assist interested Colorado school systems to organize staff development programs for their school administrators. Usually they are called administrator renewal programs. Other appropriate terms are leadership development and administrator development.

The first section of this report pertains to this question: What is the administrator renewal concept? A second section concerns this topic: What is the nature of the programs school districts organize?

~~How One State Does It: A Report on the Colorado School District-Developed Administrator Renewal Programs~~ A subsequent section deals with this theme: What is it that the Colorado Department of Education does to encourage and assist districts to organize such programs?

THE ADMINISTRATOR RENEWAL CONCEPT

The November 1974 issue of The School Administrator--the publication of the American Association of School Administrators--contains an interview with the U.S. Commissioner of Education, T. H. Bell. Dr. Bell states: "I think that the

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only way we are going to significantly and permanently improve the quality of education is to take the first step of improving the quality of the leadership, because our schools can't be any better than the kind of leadership we give them. And I think the school administrator has been greatly neglected in American education."[1] He goes on to report that most "important is inservice education and renewal, retraining, and support of the administrator who has been in the field for some time and needs an opportunity to regenerate his capabilities."[2]

Administrator renewal is a procedure and a process many school districts use to offer principals and other mid-level administrators on-the-job professional growth experiences for the purpose of gaining new skills, knowledge, and attitudes regarding problems, issues, and concerns they face in their jobs. (Examples of mid-level administrators or middle management school personnel are principals, assistant principals, supervisors, curriculum workers, directors, assistant superintendents, and other central school district-level administrators.)

In short, administrator renewal programs offer education leaders an opportunity to keep up to date. They offer the possibility of meeting the challenges of new responsibilities and the demands for improved leadership.

Every few years the characteristics of educational leadership change. These changes are a result of numerous factors and events such as new knowledge and improved practices generated by research and development efforts, accountability, declining enrollments in many districts, improved curriculum and materials, changes in financial support, mandated programs, and on and on. For the administrator --

1. New technical skills and knowledge are often necessary as improvements occur.

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[1] "Commissioner Bell Calls for Upgrading of Educational Leadership and Greater Effort from State Legislatures," The School Administrator, Vol. 31 (November, 1974), p. 1.

[2] Ibid.

2. Improved human relations skills and knowledge are often necessary for working productively with faculties, other administrators, students, parents and the public.

3. Improved conceptual abilities are always of extreme importance. These are the competencies necessary to see the larger picture, the purposes of schools, and the thrust of educational change and advancement.

For the individual administrator participating in his or her district's administrator renewal program, the essential questions each person eventually asks are: "In relation to my job, what new knowledge and skills do I need and desire to improve my leadership abilities this year and next? What additional technical, human relations, and conceptual knowledge and skills do I need?" Thus, a paramount goal of a district's program is to assist administrators to identify and achieve their goals as they see them. This is not always evident during the first one or two years of a district's professional growth program for administrators. It is often necessary and desirable to conduct workshops and similar activities regarding topics of general interest. In addition, some administrators will be thinking in terms of change for someone else: his or her school, school district, staff, students, etc. While such goals are not totally inappropriate, each participant should also eventually identify his or her own leadership needs which will be instrumental in facilitating school improvement goals and projects.

Some equally important benefits are possible. These pertain to reducing the loneliness of the principal's or other administrator's job and continually finding new job satisfactions. In this age these are extremely important values.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR RENEWAL PROGRAMS

Here's the problem we faced in Colorado sixteen months ago: What can the Colorado Department of Education do to assist interested school districts to develop systematic and planned administrator renewal or professional growth programs?

This report indicates how the question has been answered to date with some attention toward looking into the future. It is our approach to what we believe to be a broad and significant professional problem of importance to the very success of school districts

as service institutions.

Today, after sixteen months of work, thirty-one Colorado school districts are either operating or developing administrator renewal programs for their school administrators. In general, the programs have these features:

1. They are professional growth programs which administrators develop as a result of enabling leadership provided by the school district.

2. The programs are school district based, school district planned, and school district operated. Each district's program differs somewhat from those of other districts. Yet, there are common threads of practice among the several programs.

3. These professional growth or renewal programs are designed to largely capture the interest of school administrators who have completed their formal graduate education.

4. The main target population of the school district based programs are educators who serve in middle management positions.

5. The programs take place on the job, not in an isolated academic setting.

6. The programs use many of the practices of some forty-five school districts in fourteen states which developed and operated administrator renewal programs during the period of 1968-1974 in association with the CFK Ltd. Foundation. The initials CFK stand for Charles F. Kettering. A brief outline of the CFK Ltd. involvement with the development of administrator renewal programs appears in Appendix A.

Characteristics of Effective Administrator Renewal Programs. Listed below are six characteristics of effective school district based and operated administrator renewal programs. They describe the basic nature of most such programs. These characteristics represent the results over a seven-year period of the work of school districts who have developed administrator renewal programs.

The typical district actually achieves these characteristics after a two or three year period in developing their administrator renewal program. The characteristics follow.

An administrator renewal program is —

1. individualized to the greatest extent possible in regard to the renewal topics and problems identified by the involved administrators.

2. related to the on-the-job concerns of the administrators.

3. related to school improvement projects organized and conducted by the administrators.

4. continuous, rather than consisting of "one shot" events which lack follow-up activities.

5. largely based on small group and individualized learning processes, rather than only on large group workshops or similar activities.

6. based on the goal of improved performance on the job as opposed to only providing administrators with new or additional information about improved schools.

In brief, effective programs are personalized in that the participating administrators work on problems and issues of their concern: problems they face in their jobs, as they see them. Thus, the programs are on-the-job oriented. After the first year or two they become action-oriented in that actual school or professional improvement projects are the focus.

Following is an illustration of many of these six characteristics operating in an administrator renewal program. Beginning its program in mid-1974, the school district's curriculum director assumed the responsibility for organizing the administrator renewal program is association with the superintendent. After discussion sessions with the administrators, a one-page paper and pencil needs assessment survey was conducted. It listed eleven renewal or growth topics which were identified by the administrators in the earlier discussion sessions. Through this process two topics were isolated for the year's work. They dealt with "improving our skills and knowledge regarding teacher evaluation," and an updating of school law and recent court cases pertaining to principals, teachers, and the students. Each administrator in the district developed goals and a personalized growth plan.

How School Districts Develop Administrator Renewal Programs. Typically, districts follow this six-step process in organizing an administrator renewal program. This set of procedures has been summarized from the practices of school districts in beginning such programs. The steps follow:

1. One of the district's administrators assumes responsibility for providing program leadership. In about half of the cases, the superintendent assigns the responsibility. In other instances the leadership is assumed. Here are the titles of the persons providing leadership for administrator renewal programs in Colorado and elsewhere:

Superintendent	Principal
Assistant Superintendent	Director, Personnel
Director, Elementary Education	Area Superintendent
Director, Curriculum	Assistant to Superintendent
Director, Research	Director, Staff Development

2. A formal or informal task force of administrators is organized to consider the administrator renewal idea.

3. An assessment process is used to discover the interests of the district's administrators as a group or as individuals. (Various needs assessment procedures are available and used for isolating the issues on which the participating administrators desire to work. They range from simple interview techniques to discussion groups on needs and from complex paper and pencil assessment surveys to the identification of professional growth goals as a part of management by objectives systems used by administrators in many school districts. In one district, for example, the administrators develop individualized professional growth plans related to job functions about which each person desires improved abilities. Another district used the CFK Ltd. School District Climate Profile as a means of identifying their priorities and the topics about which they wish to work together as a team. A large Colorado school district developed an extensive and formal needs assessment survey in association with a university. Using the resulting priorities, they made arrangements to have university classes offered in the district for those interested.)

4. The task force develops the district's plan for providing administrators with renewal opportunities.

5. Interested administrators volunteer to be a part of the program.

6. Collegial learning teams are often organized. Such teams develop learning activities to achieve their team and individual renewal objectives.

While developing programs directed toward the characteristics of administrator renewal programs listed in a preceding section and toward the goal of providing professional growth opportunities for administrators, many districts use various beginning activities which assist in the development of a comprehensive program. As examples, six activities follow. Each has been used successfully by administrator renewal program leaders.

1. At each meeting of principals or other administrators institute the practice of taking thirty minutes or so on a professional growth topic. The topic could pertain to a new idea or practice in education or spotlight one of the school's programs. Assign an administrator to provide leadership for each session.

2. Use the Colorado Association of School Executives Academy or similar institutes as a springboard for "in district" renewal activities. Institute the practice of asking those who attend to conduct a seminar for other interested administrators. Often such seminars develop into continuing learning teams of administrators.

3. Conduct a series of short "how to do it" workshops each of which would consume three to six hours. Such workshops can deal with new concepts in education (school climate improvement, programs for gifted and talented students, etc.), leadership skills (varied decision making processes, conflict resolution, etc.), and/or technical skills (such as scheduling). If out-of-district experts are used, pair each outside resource person with one or two of the district's administrators so that the idea "we can be consultants to each other" begins to take hold.

4. Select a goal or theme for the current year and organize a workshop and collegial team follow-up "doing" activities concerning the theme or goal.

5. Select an existing job responsibility or function about which a number of the administrators feel they desire additional skills or ideas to successfully achieve. Organize workshops or collegial learning teams for the purpose of providing assistance.

6. Organize a study group on a new development in education such as the improvement of school climate, providing programs for gifted and talented students, or the reform of secondary education.

The Collegial Team as a Means of Providing Professional Growth Opportunities. The hallmark of many administrator renewal programs is the collegial learning team of administrators. It is an effective means of providing renewal opportunities. Developed by forty-five school districts, a collegial team is a group of school administrators interested in their professional growth or renewal. They are professional colleagues, committed to provide each other with support for their growth goals and serve each other as consultants, thus reducing the cost of and need for hiring consultants from outside the school district. The essential features of such a team follow.

Each member of a collegial team --

1. Designs a plan of professional self-renewal and growth.

2. Shares the plan with the team of colleagues.

3. Goes through learning and sharing experiences with the team on a regular committed basis.

4. Obtains meaningful feedback and help from the team regarding his or her plan and progress.

5. Uses the team to assist in revising professional goals for future growth.

A collegial team for renewal purposes consists of from seven to ten administrators. Typically, the team has a common topic or goal, and the team meets periodically for a two to three hours period. Most teams meet every three weeks. In brief, the collegial

team approach is a means of breaking the total group of interested administrators into smaller working teams on areas of common interest and concern.

THE ROLE OF THE COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN ASSISTING SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO DEVELOP ADMINISTRATOR RENEWAL PROGRAMS

The third part of this report concerns this question: What does the Colorado Department of Education do to encourage and assist Colorado school districts to develop administrator renewal programs?

In organizing services for school districts interested in developing renewal programs, such services should relate to existing conditions. Following are some of the conditions.

1. In any state or school district vast human resources and talents exist within the ranks of the administrators themselves. Largely, these are not used for professional growth purposes. School administrators do not effectively use each other as consultants. Yet, in the tested collegial team learning process a vehicle exists to do this. Thus, the collegial team process might be of interest to many school districts.

2. School districts possess limited financial resources to support administrator growth programs. Thus, such programs have to be accomplished at little or no cost.

3. There is little inter- and intra-district sharing of administrator talents from a teaching-learning point of view and for the improvement of administrative leadership. Districts have a tendency to only use university professors, professional consultants and administrators from other states. And, the few districts operating administrator renewal programs often are not in contact with each other for the purpose of sharing practices and ideas. Thus, providing opportunities for district administrator renewal program leaders to share their ideas, programs, and practices is of value.

4. The learning style of most existing inservice education is almost exclusively based on large group instructional techniques. Yet, action learning best takes place in small group settings.

The Goals and Objectives which follow summarize the practices of the Director of Leadership Development, Colorado Department of Education, in encouraging and assisting school districts with the development of administrator renewal programs.

Listed below are the two goals and a summary of the operating objectives for each goal.

1. Assist interested school districts in developing school district based and operated administrator renewal programs. Using a management by objectives

plan, this goal has a set of operating objectives and evidences of accomplishment. The objectives concern --

*Provide awareness of concept of school district based administrator renewal programs.

*Encourage the superintendent of each interested school district to designate one of the district's administrators to provide leadership for the administrator renewal program.

*Assist each district's program leader and planning team to organize a renewal program.

*Assist with the development of a minimum of twenty district based programs.

*Form small resource teams of school district administrator renewal program leaders to assist participating districts regarding their programs.

*Retain on mini-contract, sabbatical leave, basis school district administrator renewal program leaders to relate to and assist other districts in developing and refining their administrator renewal programs.

2. Organize statewide activities which develop collegial relationships among the program leaders of the participating school districts and which help these educators develop and operate local school district administrator renewal programs. Using a management by objectives plan, this goal has a set of operating objectives and evidences of accomplishment. The objectives concern establishing activities and communication links among the participating districts. A summary of the objectives follows:

*Form statewide informal association of administrators who are responsible for organizing and conducting administrator renewal programs for their districts. This association also includes participants from the doctor degree granting institutions of higher education in the state. (Four meetings are held yearly.)

*Develop the association into a bank of human resources.

*To assist in transferring psychological ownership for the administrator renewal idea, form planning groups and a steering committee from the association's membership.

*Conduct possibilities assessments regarding desired state level services.

*Encourage districts to share their administrator renewal program plans with other districts.

*Publish newsletter.

*Prepare series of one-to-three page single idea papers regarding administrator renewal program processes.

*Establish process to outline possible roles of the superintendent in supporting his district's administrator renewal program.

*Form task force of principals to consider a significant educational issue, such as the reform of secondary education.

*Establish panels of administrator renewal program leaders to conduct workshops at the meetings of the Colorado Association of School Executives and associated professional organizations.

In initiating the Colorado Department of Education to assist school districts to organize administrator renewal programs, the Director of Leadership Development began with the major activities listed below. They are reported in the general sequence in which they occurred. These activities represent one approach a state education department might use as a process for involving school district leaders with developing administrator renewal programs in their school systems.

1. Obtain books and monographs to provide as a resource library to potential school district administrator renewal program leaders and which will help such educators develop growth programs in their districts.

2. Develop visibility for the school district based administrator renewal program concept through initial contacts and planning sessions with superintendents or other central office level administrators of interested school districts.

3. Develop leadership plan of goals and objectives designed to stimulate school district based administrator renewal programs.

4. Organize and refine field services processes for assisting each interested school district on the actual development of an administrator renewal program.

5. Organize collegial activities among the administrator renewal program leaders of the participating school districts.

6. Organize consultant resources to support the development and operation of administrator renewal programs.

Related Activities. With the assistance of /I/D/E/A/, an affiliate of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation, a National Collegial Learning Team on School District Based Administrator Renewal Programs is underway. The team consists of a member from each of the following state departments of education: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, Utah, and Washington. The team and project goals follow:

1. Form a collegial learning team with the representatives of the participating state education departments and establish communications among the team members. Over an eighteen month period the team will meet periodically and conduct learning activities to educate its members on processes for providing state level leadership for stimulating school district based, planned, and operated renewal programs for school administrators.

2. Following the first team meeting, each team member develops in his or her state a collegial team of representatives from a minimum of five school districts. These will be administrators who are providing leadership for administrator renewal programs in their districts. Each member provides catalytic leadership for the team and the participating school district.

To provide additional assistance to districts interested in developing administrator renewal programs, the Colorado Department of Education has retained the services of five school district administrator renewal program leaders on a unique mini-sabbatical leave basis. With the title of Special Associate for Administrator Renewal Programs, Colorado Department of Education, each Associate assists other districts with administrative renewal programs for a total of ten days spread throughout the school year. Specific duties of the Special Associates follow:

1. Assist four to five assigned school districts to plan (using an available planning format) and implement their administrator renewal program.
2. Form a mini-association of the renewal program directors from the four districts and hold at least two meetings during the school year.
3. Take responsibility for one issue of the administrator renewal newsletter.
4. Develop one single concept idea paper on an aspect of administrator renewal.
5. As a group plan and conduct the spring state conference for administrative renewal program directors.
6. Develop a management by objectives plan for the above responsibilities.

Finally, a series of seminars for superintendents of districts in different size categories has been tried with success. This practice is being developed into a program.

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In working with school districts on administrator renewal programs since 1968, it can be concluded they are not difficult to begin. It is a good idea. It is economical. It captures the interest of many superintendents. The real challenge to a state education department is to assist each interested school district to sustain its program once the initial glow of enthusiasm wears off. Thus, the leadership services of a department are extremely important.

There is a larger goal which administrator renewal programs--given time to mature--should achieve. It is that of school effectiveness. In the final analysis, school

principals, superintendents, and other administrators will not be judged by the efficiency with which they have run their schools. Rather, they will be judged by the effectiveness with which they have educated a generation of thoughtful, sensitive, and humane, as well as informed, young men and women.

APPENDIX A

CFK Ltd. and the Development of Administrator Renewal Programs

An outline of the CFK Ltd. involvement with the development of administrator renewal programs follows:

1. The CFK Ltd. Foundation was established for limited life in 1967 by Charles F. Kettering II. Achieving its purposes in 1974, it dissolved. Edward Brainard served as the foundation's president.

2. In a 1967 national survey, a sample of school administrators were asked to identify crucial educational problems being overlooked. One of the identified concerns pertained to the idea that school districts need additional inservice education processes they can use to invest in the growth of their administrators. This resulted in what is now called administrator renewal.

3. Forty-five school districts in fourteen states were involved in developing their own administrator renewal programs. The results achieved by these districts in association with the foundation appear in a series of CFK Ltd. Occasional Papers. (See Appendix B).

4. Each involved district appointed an Associate to the foundation. This was the educator who directed the district's activities in administrator renewal. The Associates as a group determined the foundation's direction and policies. In brief, the practice was to insure that the psychological ownership for the endeavors rested with the districts and their representatives.

5. The foundation's role was that of a catalyst. It assisted districts in developing their programs and collegial learning teams of administrators. Also, it provided national workshops where representatives of the involved districts could share their ideas and practices. Finally, it provided the leadership for assisting the districts' leaders to publish summaries of their administrator renewal program practices and results.

APPENDIX B

Publications on Administrator Renewal

How School Administrators Make Things Happen by Howard and Brainard (Available from Parker Publishing Company, West Nyack, New York 10994)

School Climate Improvement: A Challenge to the School Administrator by Fox, Brainard, and others (Available from Phi Delta Kappa, 8th and Union, Bloomington, Indiana 47401)

CFK Ltd. Monographs (Available from Nueva Learning Center, P. O. Box 1366, Burlingame, California 94010)

School District Climate Improvement: A Challenge to the Superintendent by Shaheen and Pedrick

Individualizing Administrator Continuing Education by Brainard

School and Self Assessment Processes: A Guidebook for Administrators by Prince

Self Performance Achievement Record (SPAR) by Olivero and Others

Administrator Renewal: The Leadership Role in Collegial Team Development by Geddes

Colorado Department of Education Series of Single Concept Papers

What is an Administrator Renewal Program?

Major Types of Administrator Renewal Programs

Starting an Administrator Renewal Program: Eight Ideas

The Collegial Team: A Procedure for Supporting an Administrator Renewal Program

Administrator Renewal Programs and the Colorado Department of Education

Suggested Contents of an Administrator Renewal Program Plan

The Talent Survey

Major Sources of Human Resources to Support Administrator Renewal Programs